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PHILIPPINES

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

SUSTAINABLE COCOA EXTENSION SERVICES FOR SMALLHOLDERS (SUCCESS) ALLIANCE FOR EAST ASIA REGION (SUCCESS – Philippines)

BACKGROUND

Cocoa has been cultivated in the Philippines since the 17th century, often for household consumption. It entered into commercial production in the 1950s but was halted by cocoa pod borer infestation. During the 1970s the government again encouraged cocoa production, but this growth was dealt with a blow when the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program took effect in 1988, and the cocoa estates were divided among plantation workers. The result was a degradation of cocoa estates and a decrease in production. At present, the country produces approximately 6,000 metric tons (MT) of cocoa annually, which barely supplies the domestic requirements.

USAID has helped the DENR put in place an enabling policy framework for the sustainable management of the country's forest resources, especially in the uplands. To address the subsistence and livelihood needs of the upland dwellers and lessen their dependence on timber based activities, enterprise development has been a critical component of the Mission's program for sustainable forest management. One of the farming systems promoted is agro forestry or production of tree crops. Planting of tree crops such as cocoa has been encouraged for the buffer zone of the community-based forest management communities. The tree crop farming system is a land-use practice suitable for the uplands as it integrates economic activities with natural resources management and environment conservation.

The recent improvement in prices for cocoa augurs well for intensive efforts to promote cocoa production. Through this project, it is hoped that the increase in hectares planted to cocoa and increase of farming families planting the crop will benefit both the Filipino farm communities in terms of increased production and income, thus reducing further destructive activities in the forests.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Improve the quantity and quality of smallholder-grown cocoa through the adoption of good crop husbandry methods and effective integrated pest-management practices and maintain a regular income for cocoa farmers.



Objective 2: Strengthen the partnership between local governments, universities and farmer groups and the U.S. private sector to better utilize resources to support the sustainable development of the cocoa industry while ensuring the conservation of the forest base.

ACTIVITIES

SUCCESS Philippines will focus on the following major activities:

- integrating gender issues and participation;
- training of trainers (TOT);
- cocoa nursery establishment in each priority municipality;
- farmer's training using the farmer-filed school approach



SUCCESS will also work with other USAID partners in Western Mindanao, Northern Luzon and Palawan. Limited annual study tours both in-country and in Indonesia, have been programmed to promote best practices in cocoa production and farm management, and learn the lessons of cocoa farming communities. The local government units (LGUs) in the respective areas will provide available resources such as agriculture extension agents, and provincial and municipal agriculture officers, among others, as their contribution.



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